

Mr. Lee served the church officially until about 1910, and he and Mrs. Lee kept the work going until about 1918, when an accident incapacitated him for work for a time. From that time until 1928, ministers were appointed to take care of the field in connection with their pastorate in Springville. In 1928 the chapel was sold to Henry Gardner for \$5500, and has since been remodeled by John R. Thomas, and is now being used as a tailor shop.

Those serving Spanish Fork between 1910 and 1928 were Rev. William Morrison, Rev. C. K. Davis, Rev. J. C. Patterson, Rev. David J. Spratt, Rev. W. H. Ensign, and Rev. S. Hall Barratt, Jr.

**Lutheran Church.** — An Icelandic Lutheran Church was built on the East Bench and for many years a congregation was held together by Rev. Runolf Runolfson.

### Irrigation

IRRIGATION, without which farming could not be carried on successfully in Utah Valley, was one of the first problems which pressed the settlers for solution, and one which has caused the expenditure of great amounts of money and time, as well as litigation in the courts.

One of the first things the settlers did, almost before they took time to build themselves shelters, was to dig a canal, known as the South Ditch, by which water was taken from the Spanish Fork river near where the sugar factory now stands, to irrigate the crops which they planted in the spring of 1851. The first irrigation company was organized in 1852.

The city charter of Spanish Fork granted to the city government the power to control the waters of Spanish Fork river, a right which was exercised to the fullest extent, dividing the waters between the various "fields," as the different farming districts were called, appointing watermasters to control the water, and levying

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and collecting taxes to defray the expenses of maintaining the canals.

Various grants of water for manufacturing purposes were made by the City Council, the earliest of these being on December 17, 1858, when Archibald Gardner was granted sufficient water to run his grist mill, then in the process of erection, and to John L. Butler and Archibald Gardner, to run a saw mill, which was then operating. Grants were made at various times to different citizens for the use of water for operating molasses mills. The stipulation was usually made, however, that they were not to pollute the water with waste from the mill, as the water was used by the citizens for culinary purposes.

The land owners in the West Feld were granted the power to incorporate a company, to elect officers and pass laws to govern the use of land and water on April 22, 1859, and the South Field land owners were granted the same privilege two months later, but the right was not exercised for twenty-four years, the West Field Irrigation Company being incorporated in the year 1883.

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On March 8, 1865, the waters of the river were divided, half to be used by the property east of Main Street and the other half to be used by the property west of Main Street.

In 1873-74 a dam was built at the head of the Mill Race, or Main Sect, as it was called, costing \$1700.

On February 5th, 1876, Jeremiah Murray and thirty-four others petitioned the Spanish Fork City Council for the use of the water in Spanish Fork River below what was known as the Pete White Dam, for use on lands formerly known as the Indian Farm, which was granted. This was the beginning of the Lake Shore Irrigation Company.

The settlers on the East Bench, who had organized an irrigation company, petitioned the City Council for water for three thousand acres of land and two hundred city lots, on April 1, 1876, but at a meeting held the following month, it was reported by a special committee that all the water in the river had been appropriated and only surplus high water could be granted to the petitioners.

**Wolf Hollow Reservoir.**—The growing need for more irrigation water caused the city to

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build a reservoir in Wolf Hollow, about a mile south-east of the city, in which to store water during the high water season, to be used later during the time of low water. The reservoir was completed in 1884, at a cost of \$3700, which was defrayed partially by a special tax on the property benefitted, and the remainder from the general fund. The following year after the reservoir was established, land owners nearby complained that the seepage was ruining their land, so it was necessary to abandon the project.

Following the organization of the first water company in 1852, several companies have been formed, each of which in its turn acquired title to water from Spanish Fork river by applying it to beneficial use. The companies which thus came into being on Spanish Fork river include the West Field Irrigation Company, the South Irrigation Company, the Salem Irrigation Company, the Lake Shore Irrigation Company and the East Bench Irrigation and Manufacturing Company, the name of which was changed in 1929 to the East Bench Canal Company.

As rights in Spanish Fork river became more and more complex, disputes sometimes arose,

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particularly in seasons of low water, and it became necessary to establish by court decree the rights of each company in the stream. A laudable custom in the early days of Utah was to take matters of dispute into the Bishops' and High Council Courts of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, instead of into the courts of law. In these courts the church authorities sat and adjudicated cases in a manner very similar to that obtaining in regular judicial practice, the principal differences being that the court had no power except that of kindly persuasion to enforce its decrees, and that there was no cost of court to be paid by the parties to the litigation, all the church officials doing this work gratis.

**The High Council Decree.**—Into such a court, the High Council of Utah Stake, on the recommendation of the City Council of Spanish Fork, went the various irrigation companies drawing water from the Spanish Fork river, to get a decision as to just what portion of the flow of the stream each should receive. After hearing the testimony in the matter, the High Council decreed that the West Field and Spanish Fork City should receive jointly eleven twenty-

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fourths of the water in the river; the East Bench two twenty-fourths; Salem, four; South Irrigation Company, six; Lake Shore, one. This decision was rendered early in 1887, and has been the basis of the division of the waters of Spanish Fork river ever since.

Some difficulty arose between the City and the West Field in the division of their portion, and it was decreed by the Fourth District Court in 1888 that the West Field was to receive forty-three fifty-fifths of the water in the Mill Race, which belonged jointly to the City and the West Field. The irrigation company's water was to be delivered at the Slough bridge just south of the city.

**The District Court Decree.**—The rights in Spanish Fork river were settled by decree of the Fourth District Court, Judge W. N. McCarty, on April 20, 1899. The court accepted the division of the river made by the High Council decree twelve years previously, so far as the normal flow of the stream is concerned, but made a change in the distribution of the "high water," a matter which the church court had not settled. The court of law decree provides that the stream shall be divided accord-

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ing to the twenty-fourths only when the stream had a flow of 148 second feet or less and that when the stream is more than 148 second feet, it shall be divided into forty-firsts, with distribution as follows: West Field, eleven; South Irrigation Company, eight and one-half; Salem, seven and one-half; East Bench, seven; Lake Shore, seven.

As the population of Spanish Fork City and vicinity became larger and more land was brought under cultivation, the waters of Spanish Fork river became inadequate to supply irrigation, so about the beginning of the Twentieth century, land owners and water companies began to cast about for ways and means of increasing the water supply.

To Heber C. Jex, who was at that time Mayor of Spanish Fork City, probably belongs the credit for taking the initial step in the great Strawberry Valley Irrigation Project.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The following entry appears in Mr. Jex' diary of July 19, 1902: "As per arrangements which I had made with Frank C. Kelsey, C. E., of Salt Lake City, he, Kelsey, Wm. O. Jones, City Councilman, and I left for Strawberry valley to look into the prospects of bringing the Strawberry Valley waters over into our valley. We estimated the little and big Strawberry creeks would equal in flow the Spanish Fork river, and Engineer Kelsey said it was a feasible thing to bring the Strawberry

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**Strawberry Irrigation Project.**—In August, 1902, a party of citizens of Spanish Fork, Payson and Salem, made a trip to Strawberry Valley for the purpose of investigating the feasibility of an irrigation project. In this party were State Senator Henry Gardner, Mayor Heber C. Jex of Spanish Fork City, James S. McBeth and other citizens of Payson; Theodore Dedrickson, Fred Matley, Alma C. Davis and Richard W. Money, of Spanish Fork; A. T. Money and A. W. Johnson of Palmyra; E. B. K. Ferguson of Lake Shore; and Frank Davis of Salem. With the company also was Engineer Frank C. Kelsey, who was employed to make a preliminary survey of the project.

Strawberry Valley is a mountain valley about forty miles south-east of Spanish Fork, through which flows Strawberry river and Indian Creek, tributaries of the Duchesne river, the water eventually finding its way down the Colorado river and into the Pacific Ocean.

The preliminary survey made by the party showed that by constructing a dam across the

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water into the head of Diamond Fork by means of a tunnel. I therefore filed on the waters of the valley as Mayor of Spanish Fork, for the benefit of its citizens. I had taken with me a blank form to be filled in for said appropriation."

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Strawberry river and a long dike across a low pass where Indian Creek empties into the valley, a lake of water approximately seven miles long by four miles wide might be impounded, containing, when filled, approximately 110,000 acre feet of water. The party reported also that it would be necessary to bore a tunnel through the Strawberry divide about three and three-quarters miles long to tap the reservoir and deliver the water into the headwaters of Spanish Fork river. The water was filed on and appropriated immediately on a formal document drawn for the purpose for the citizens of Spanish Fork by Mayor Heber C. Jex.

A mass meeting of the citizens of the south end of Utah county was held at the Central Meeting House in Spanish Fork on October 30, 1902, to discuss ways and means of getting the water from Strawberry Valley. The sense of the meeting was that the work should be pushed with all possible haste and the matter was placed in the hands of the following committee: Hyrum Lemmon, James S. McBeth and Ammon Nebeker of Payson; Fred Matley, W. O. Creer, and William Jex of Spanish Fork; William Davis, Jr., of Salem; Joseph Creer of Lake

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Shore; William T. Tew, of Mapleton; Henry Gardner and Samuel Brockbank of Spanish Fork.

After eighteen months of effort, the citizens came to the conclusion that the project was too large an undertaking for them to handle and commenced negotiations with the United States Reclamation Service. A government survey was made which determined that the project was feasible. The Strawberry Valley Water Users Association was then formed, as a medium to deal with the Reclamation Service. This organization was incorporated in August, 1905, with the following officers: Henry Gardner, president; J. S. McBeth of Payson, vice-president; Heber C. Jex of Spanish Fork, secretary; and the following directors: Hyrum Lemmon and Jonathon S. Page, Jr., of Payson, William Davis, Jr., of Salem; W. T. Tew, of Mapleton; Lars Nielsen and Fred Matley of Spanish Fork; and Joseph E. Creer of Lake Shore. During 1905, about thirty thousand acres in Spanish Fork was signed up for water right and about eight thousand at Payson.

Early in August of 1905 the road through

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Diamond Fork to the tunnel was commenced. This was a big undertaking, as prior to this time the road was little more than a cattle trail, and it was necessary to build a highway over which heavy loads of machinery and materials could be hauled. When it was completed, it was one of the best roads in the state, having an easy and gradual grade from Diamond Switch, the railroad point, to the summit of Strawberry Divide.

The agreement between the water users and the government was signed in December, 1905, and a banquet was held at the Roberts Hotel in Provo in honor of the event.

The project was now pushed forward by the United States Reclamation Service, the various phases of the work being handled so as to be completed about the same time. After construction work had gone forward for a little over a year, it was determined that a power plant should be erected on the project, primarily for the purpose of furnishing electrical energy for driving the tunnel, then in the course of construction. The matter of furnishing light and power to the various cities and towns under the project was also taken into consideration,



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and for this reason the plant was established in the mouth of Spanish Fork canyon, about three miles east of Spanish Fork. Authorization for this phase of the project was secured from the Reclamation Service in February, 1907. The power plant was rushed to completion and aided very materially in the construction work on the project.

Work on the tunnel, the principal phase of the construction, went forward summer and winter for seven years before the bore, six and one-half by seven and one-half feet was finally "holed through" on the morning of June 20, 1912, and by November of that year the 19,400 feet of tunnel was lined with concrete and ready to carry water through the Strawberry ridge and empty it into the headwaters of Spanish Fork river. Spanish Fork honored the completion of the tunnel with a big three-day celebration on July 2, 3, and 4, 1912.

**Contracts With the Government.** — Several knotty problems now confronted the water users' association before they could complete their contract with the government and secure delivery of the water to the thirsty farm lands. A high line canal to carry water from Spanish

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Fork River to Payson and a large area on the south slope of the valley had to be built, and the question of whether the canal should be made a part of the project as a whole or should be a separate unit to be paid for by the land which it served was argued at great length and was finally decided as a separate unit. The matter of rights of the various companies owning Spanish Fork river was a matter of much controversy. The river varies so greatly from year to year, yielding as low as 24,000 acre feet of water in excessively dry years to 80,000 acre feet in years of high water, that it was difficult to determine just what the water companies should be allowed for their rights. Finally, in 1915, the irrigation companies of the Spanish Fork river waived to the government all above 390 second feet of the flow of the stream.

The last obstacle, legal and otherwise, having been removed, the Strawberry water was turned through the tunnel on June 27th, 1915, and every summer since has guaranteed an adequate water supply to the farmers under the project.

The project was operated and maintained by the United States Reclamation Service until September 26, 1926, when a contract was enter-

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ed into with the Strawberry Water Users Association to take it over. This organization was incorporated in 1921, the business being conducted by a board of seven directors.

## CHAPTER X

### Spanish Fork in the Foreign Wars

**S**PANISH FORK has done her full share in the service of our country in times of war.

**The Spanish-American War.**—Spanish Fork, although situated far inland, and removed from the scene of conflict by many intervening miles, played a creditable part in the Spanish-American War. On April 23, 1898, President William McKinley issued a call for 125,000 volunteers to serve during the war or for two years. Fredrick S. Dart, a native of Vermont, who was visiting at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Uri Stewart, walked nine miles to Springville, where the nearest recruiting office was located, and offered his services, becoming the first volunteer from Spanish Fork. His enlistment was on April 25th. On May 2nd a recruiting office having been established at the City Hall in Spanish Fork, Uri Stewart, Jr., his cousin, Luther Stewart of Jensen, Utah, who was visiting him, Stephen and Einer Bjarnson, brothers, John B. West, who had spent the winter here